

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS:

The attached five (5) sheets of replacement drawings, which are currently amended to label Figures 9-13B as "--Prior Art--" as requested by the examiner, are included with this response.

Attachments: Replacement Sheets -- Figures 9/13 - 13/13 (5 sheets)

REMARKS

In the Office Action mailed May 17, 2005, the Examiner rejected claims 1 and 3 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Application No. 5,481,338 to Yasukuni (hereafter referred to as *Yasukuni*); rejected claims 4 and 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Yasukuni* in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,509,824 to Inaba et al. (hereafter referred to as *Inaba et al.*); and indicated that claims 2 and 6-8 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicant has amended claim 2. Claims 1-9 remain pending in the application. No new matter has been added by this Reply.

By this reply, Applicant has provided five (5) replacement sheets of drawings for Fig. 9-13B in which the label "--Prior Art--" is added to each of the figures, pursuant to the Examiner's request. Applicant therefore requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw his objection to the drawings.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter in claims 2 and 6-8. Applicant has rewritten claim 2 in independent form including all limitations of its base claim 1. As a result, claims 2 and 6-8 are in condition for allowance. Applicant therefore requests that the Examiner withdraw the objection to claims 2 and 6-8 and allow these claims.

Applicant respectfully traverses the 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) rejection of claims 1 and 3 for at least the reason that *Yasukuni* fails to disclose each and every claim element. For example, independent claim 1, from which claim 3 depends, recites a combination

of elements including, among other things, at least one terminal support “wherein said terminal support includes at least one pawl part extending in a slide insertion direction of said corresponding terminal portion for preventing a displacement of said corresponding terminal portion in a direction substantially normal to a surface of said corresponding terminal portion.” In contrast, *Yasukuni* discloses in Fig. 1 and describes at col. 2, lines 36-55, an insulative support 15 provided with openings 22 and locking projections 19 that fit into notches 16a of contacts 16 of fusible portions 20 of fuse element 11. However, as shown in Fig. 4 of *Yasukuni*, projections 19 extend in a direction orthogonal to the slide insertion direction of fusible portions 20. Thus, the projections 19 of *Yasukuni* are not the same as Applicant’s claimed pawl part extending in a slide insertion direction of a corresponding terminal portion, as required by amended claim 1.

Because *Yasukuni* fails to disclose each and every claim element of independent claim 1, the section 102(b) rejection with respect to claim 1 is improper and should be withdrawn. Furthermore, the section 102(b) rejection with respect to dependent claim 3 should also be withdrawn at least by virtue of its dependence from independent claim 1.

Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection of claims 4 and 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Yasukuni* in view of *Inaba et al.* No *prima facie* case of obviousness has been established with respect to claims 4 and 5 for at least the reason that neither *Yasukuni* nor *Inaba et al.*, taken alone or in combination, discloses or suggests each and every claim element. For example, independent claim 1, from which claims 4 and 5 ultimately depend, recites a combination of elements including, among other things, at least one terminal support “wherein said terminal support

includes at least one pawl part extending in a slide insertion direction of said corresponding terminal portion for preventing a displacement of said corresponding terminal portion in a direction substantially normal to a surface of said corresponding terminal portion.” For the reasons noted above, *Yasukuni* fails to disclose or suggest at least a terminal support including at least one pawl part extending in a slide insertion direction of a terminal portion. *Inaba et al.*, which was cited for its purported teaching of a nut-screw terminal connection, fails to remedy this deficiency.

Because neither *Yasukuni* nor *Inaba et al.*, taken alone or in combination, discloses or suggests each and every claim element of independent claim 1, or either of claims 4 or 5 that depend therefrom, the section 103(a) rejection of dependent claims 4 and 5 is improper and should be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and reexamination of this application and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

The Office Action contains a number of statements reflecting characterizations of the related art and the claims. Regardless of whether any such statement is identified herein, Applicant declines to automatically subscribe to any statement of characterization in the Office Action.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

FINNEGAN, HENDERSON, FARABOW,
GARRETT & DUNNER, L.L.P.

Dated: September 13, 2005

By: 

Brad C. Rametta
Reg. No. 54,387

Attachments: Replacement Drawing Sheets 9/13 - 13/13